

Vice President. And so much of the things that we have done, from family and medical leave to parity for mental health in health insurance policies, are things that came out of the work he and Tipper did.

So people ask me—I say, “I’m for Vice President Gore because he’ll keep the prosperity going, because he’ll do more to spread it to people and places left behind and to help all American families, and because he understands the future and can lead us there. I am for the Democrats in the Senate and the House races.” And you’re going to give us, by the way, four or five new ones out here in California alone. And I’m for them. And I have a special interest in one in New York, as you know. *[Laughter]* But I’m for them because we’ve had a test run here.

And if you listen to this rhetoric in the campaign, you know the Republicans never talk about their primaries. They’re hoping you’ll forget that and have amnesia. *[Laughter]* And all the commitments they made, and all the things they said, and they really don’t want to talk about, they want this to be a blur. They want you to think that nobody could mess up this economy. Take your tax cut and run.

And it’s kind of like a—they kind of want you to say, “Well, their fraternity had it for 8 years. Give it to ours for a while.” *[Laughter]* Let me tell you something, this is about people’s lives, folks. This is about our children’s future. You’ve got to go out and tell people in California and beyond California, because we’ve been here a lot. I’ve been here more than any President ever had. *[Laughter]* You know what’s going to—you live this, and you have—here in California, you have a searing memory of what it was like in 1992. You remember what it was like.

So you need to reach out across the country. And in this convention and after the convention, you need to say to the American people, “Hey, we don’t want a negative campaign. We want a positive campaign. We don’t want to say anything bad about our opponents, personally. We want to assume that they’re honorable, and therefore, they will do exactly what they say.” *[Laughter]* But we don’t want them to be too selective with you in pointing out our honest differences. So we want this to be a campaign in which we hon-

estly expose our differences, and we measure those differences against the experience we have had.

And then we say to people—you’ve got to make this about the future. We may never have a time like this in our lifetime, and we owe it to the children in this room and throughout this country to build them the future of our dreams. We can do that.

And if we make that the issue, then Al Gore and his new running mate will be elected, my favorite candidate for the Senate and a lot more will be elected, and Dick Gephardt will be the Speaker of the House. And we will get what we should get because we have delivered for the American people.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. in the Century Room at the Century Plaza Hotel & Spa. In his remarks, he referred to William M. Daley, general chair, and Donna L. Brazile, campaign manager, Gore 2000; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; and Art Torres, chair, State Democratic Party. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Saxophone Club Reception in Hollywood, California

June 23, 2000

The President. Well, thank you very much. I never thought I’d live to hear Bill Maher say those things. *[Laughter]* And he said it in front of the press, which means he’ll have to dump on me twice as hard next week. *[Laughter]* But it’ll be worth it. I love it. Thank you, Bill. Thank you, Vivica. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

I want to thank our hosts for having us here. I was coming over here with my buddy Terry McAuliffe tonight, and he said, “Now, tell me where we’re going?” He’s a good, Irish-Catholic boy. I said, “We’re going to a place called the Garden of Eden.” *[Laughter]* He said, “We can’t go.” *[Laughter]* I said, “Why?” He said, “They’ll accuse one of us of being in search of original sin.” *[Laughter]* But here we are, and they did a nice job for us. Thank you very much, all

of you. It's really beautiful, thank you. Thank you so much.

Now, look, you all came here to have a good time, and you probably don't want to hear a political speech. But I do want to say one or two things. First of all, I am very, very grateful for the chance that I have had to serve as President these last 7½ years. I am grateful for the support I received from California, from southern California, from Los Angeles, and from this community, and I thank you very, very, much.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

Audience member. Run for Governor of California. [Laughter]

The President. I don't think so. You've got a good Governor, and you've got to get a good President.

The second thing is, somebody might ask you why you came, tomorrow, and I want you to be able to give a serious but brief answer. There are three things you need to know about this election. Number one, it is real important. It's just as important as it was in '92 and '96. And I want all the young people here, everybody here under 40, to listen to me about this.

In '92, when I got elected, California was in the dumps. We had had riots in the streets. We had the politics of division. Everybody knew what had to be done. We had to get the show back on the road. We had to turn the economy around. We had to get the society coming together again. The political system had to work. You didn't have to be a genius to know what we needed to do.

But now things are going well. And what I want to say to you, if you're young, is this: It is just as stern a test of a nation's judgment and character what you do with the good times as what you do with adversity. And everybody here who is over 30 can remember at least one time in your life when you made a significant mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Nobody who's lived any length of time has failed to make a mistake like that.

So the first thing I want you to know is this is a big issue, this election. What's the question? The question is, what are we going

to do with the prosperity? Are we going to indulge ourselves, take all the short-term fixes, pretend there are no consequences, or take this opportunity to build the future of our dreams? That's really what this is about.

And there are a lot of things out there to do. What are you all going to do when all the baby boomers like me retire and there's only two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare? We need to prepare for that. We have more kids in our schools than ever before, and they're more diverse. What are you going to do 20 years from now, if you're young, and we don't succeed in giving them all a world-class education?

We still have people in this country, in this city, on the Indian reservations, and the rural areas, that aren't part of all this prosperity. If we don't give them a chance to participate now, when will you ever get around to it?

What are you going to do 20 years from now if we don't do something about global warming and prove that we can still grow the economy and improve the environment? If all these people that say you can't do that and don't worry, just keep putting stuff in the air, what are you going to do if the sea level rises a foot? What will it be like here? What will you be making movies about?

So you've got to think about these things. We have never in my lifetime had the chance we have now for you, as citizens, to decide that you want to do big things and get them done. So it's an important election.

The second thing I want to tell you is—as if you needed reminding—there are huge differences between the two parties, from the candidates for President to the Senate to the House. Now, Bill made a joke about Governor Bush, and people have made a few jokes about me, as he pointed out. [Laughter] People made a few jokes about Al Gore. Al Gore makes jokes about himself. We all ought to make a few jokes and laugh and have a good time.

But I want to be dead serious about this. You have a chance here to have a positive election. That is, most of these elections the last 20 years have been fueled by fanatics or people who wanted power, and they thought that the best way to win an election was to keep everybody home that could think

and then try to persuade those that were going to vote that their opponents were just one notch above a car thief. I mean, how many elections have you seen like that?

Now, you don't have to say anything bad about anybody in this election. All we ought to do is just have a debate about what we think we ought to do with our prosperity, and know what the differences are. So, number one, it's a big election. It's about your future. Number two, there are real differences.

And here's the third point, and it's real important. Only the Democrats really want you to understand what the differences are. You listen to the Republicans talk, you'd think they never even had a primary. [*Laughter*] And when the lobbyist for the NRA says that if they win the White House, then the NRA will have an office in the White House, it's probably true, but it's inconvenient for him, so they sort of hide that.

We differ. They want to spend all this projected surplus we've worked so hard to get over the next 10 years on a big tax cut which would benefit a lot of you—a big tax cut—and spend the rest of it on partial privatization of Social Security and a big national missile defense program and whatever else they've promised. And there won't be any money left, even if all the surplus materializes. If it doesn't materialize, we'll be back to deficits, high interest rates, not such a good economy, and you will pay the price.

We say—and I'm proud of Al Gore for saying this—it may not be popular, but we're going to save some of this money, because it may not materialize. The taxes you pay for Medicare, we're going to save. Pay the debt down, and know we can take care of the baby boomers when they retire without bankrupting the rest of you. It's time to think about the long run.

We have differences on the environment. We have differences on education. We're for putting 100,000 teachers in our schools and modernizing our schools and providing extra funds and requiring schools to turn around if they're failing or shut down—and they're not.

We're for raising the minimum wage, and they're not. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We think all seniors

on Medicare ought to have access to affordable prescription drugs, and we ought to take this time and provide it, and they don't. We have big differences.

Now, there are lots of others, but you get the idea. If we have a debate about this, we will win.

Now, let me just say one other thing. In the history of America, we have always had a Vice President—we've had some pretty great Vice Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was Vice President, made a pretty good President. Theodore Roosevelt was Vice President, made a good President. Harry Truman was Vice President, was a great President. But we have never had a person in the office of Vice President who, while he was Vice President, had anything like the positive impact on the economy and the society of our country that Al Gore has had. He's by far the best Vice President in the entire history of the United States.

And therefore, he is by far the best qualified person to be President who has run for office in my adult lifetime, because of the way he spent the last 8 years and because I had sense enough to give him a lot to do. [*Laughter*] It's self-serving for me to say, but he has performed magnificently. And there are three reasons you ought to be for him: number one, he will keep this prosperity going because he won't change our economic policy; he'll build on it.

Number two, he'll try to include everybody in his vision of America, the people in places left behind, all the families that are working for a living but need help to raise their children, need help with child care or long-term care for their parents or their disabled family members, or after-school programs for their kids. He'll try to do that. And everybody will have a place. We led the fight for the hate crimes victory that we got in the Senate this week, which a lot of you like. We think everybody should be part of our America.

And the final reason you ought to vote for him is, he understands the future, and he can lead us there. He understands the implications of the Internet revolution. He understands that all your medical records and all your financial records are going to be in somebody's computer file somewhere, and your privacy ought to be protected, and they

ought not to be invaded unless you give permission to do it. That's an important issue.

He understands that global warming is real. He's the first politician in American life that said anything to me about climate change, long before it was widely accepted that it was happening.

So what do you need in a President? Somebody with the best experience; somebody that will keep the prosperity going; somebody that cares about all of us; someone that understands the future. If you want—all of you, so many of you said, "Thank you very much for being a good President. I wish I could do something for you." You can do something for me: Make sure that everybody you know in this State and across America understands it's a big election; there are real differences; and we want you to know that they are and that we intend to build the future of your dreams. And we need Al Gore. We need these candidates for the Senate and the House.

And if you'll go out and tell people that, and tell people we don't want to badmouth anybody, just let's talk about what our honest disagreements are, we're going to have a big celebration in November. And more important, you young people here are going to have the best days America has ever known.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. in the Fireplace Lounge at the Garden of Eden nightclub. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Maher, host of "Politically Incorrect"; actress Vivica A. Fox, who introduced the President; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; Gov. Gray Davis of California; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Los Angeles, California

June 23, 2000

Thank you. Well, first of all, I was very touched by what you said, Kenny, and I thank you and Tracy for having us here in your beautiful home in this little pup tent. [Laughter] I'm going to call home tonight, and Hillary is going to say, "Well, what did you do

tonight?" And I'm going to say, "Well, I went camping with K rations." [Laughter]

Anyway, I thank you for doing this, and I thank all of you for coming. And you make Joe Andrew and Terry and Donna and Yolanda and all of us who are going to fight this election out have heart and feel good about it. And we're very proud that people like you are supporting our party. And I thank you for what you said about me.

I guess tonight I would like to make not just kind of a traditional political speech, but I would like to say three or four things. I have been very fortunate in my life. I got to do something I wanted to do for a long time. And when I started, only my mother thought I could win. I never will forget how President Bush, in '92, used to refer to me as the Governor of a small southern State. And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And you know what? I still do.

I mean, the thing that makes this country work at its best is that people get a chance to live their dreams. And the thing that makes it improvable is there are still too many who don't or there are still people who find folks standing in the way.

When I ran for President in '91 and '92, I did it not because I was dissatisfied being the Governor of a small southern State—I actually was having a heck of a good time. But I really was worried about our country. Our economy was in bad shape, but it was about more than money. We had all these—the social problems were getting worse; they had the riots here in L.A.—you remember that—and the political rhetoric was so divisive.

And the more I listened to it, the more I thought there's something funny about Washington, because where I come from, everybody tried to work through their differences, and in Washington people said, "Well, I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight." Then I realized that they did it partly because they thought it was the only way they'd ever get on the evening news.

Anyway, we set out on this odyssey to try to change the way the political system works and change America for the better, and it has worked out reasonably well. The country is in better shape than it was 8 years ago.